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"THE STRAD" LIBRARY, No. XXII.

CHAMBER MUSIC FOR AMATEURS

NOTES FROM A LIBRARY

BY

JOHN D. HAYWARD, M.D.

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PREFACE.

The educational value of the Arts is becoming generally recognised, and methods for their culture are being attached to the Universities and Schools of the Empire. In this country, until recently, music was the Cinderella of the Arts; but now the Universities, the Secondary and even the Primary Schools are being considered in this respect, while faculties, professorships, scholarships, municipal orchestras, festivals, cheap and even free concerts are being provided, and the Carnegie Trust is doing fine work for British music.

Quite independently of its educational value, there is an amount of æsthetic pleasure to be obtained from the cultivation of music, both to the performer and the listener; in this Vale of Tears such enjoyment we cannot afford to neglect.

No doubt, as some folk are colour blind, others are tone deaf; but such unfortunate individuals are less numerous than is commonly believed. The man who, given suitable instruction and opportunities, really "hath no music in himself, nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds," must be left to his "dull spirit" and "dark affections" and to the "treasons, stratagems and spoils," for which Shakespeare declares him fit.

PREFACE.

Of all forms of music that of Chamber Music is the easiest to cultivate, in the domestic circle and in small communities. The interest apparently obtained by the author's articles, in the issues of *THE STRAD*, has suggested their collection in the present form, in the hope of helping to more general practice of the art. In countless homes domestic Chamber Music might be arranged amongst relatives and friends, probably with more benefit than the eternal card parties. In villages and scattered communities a little enthusiasm and research would enable Chamber Music circles to be formed.

The Index at the end may serve as a list, to which the amateur may refer when wishing to extend his repertoire or to find an opinion on some composition offered for his library. Further experience will lead to additions, as it has with the author since these lines were written. Such can be noted on the margins.

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Chamber Music for Amateurs.

NOTES FROM A LIBRARY.

C H A P T E R I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE title "Chamber Music," broadly regarded, will include all music suitable for production in a private room, or a small hall; and so would comprise instrumental solos, with or without accompaniment, and much vocal music. Generally, however, the term is limited to compositions for a few instruments, and it does not include music for the voice; and in this restricted sense the term is hereafter employed. Such Chamber Music will be here regarded solely from the point of view of the average amateur executant; an amateur denoting an individual who has devoted time and practice to the study of some musical instrument and who has acquired a fair technical ability on such instrument, but whose profession is not that of music. Of course, the word "amateur" will apply to those of very varying degrees of skill; but the qualifying

word—"average"—will exclude those with only elementary technique and talent, as well as the gifted performer whose exceptional skill entitles him to comparison with the professional executant.

In the following pages the term Chamber Music, besides excluding music for the voice, will be still further restricted, for compositions for one instrument, with or without accompaniment, or for two instruments of which one is the piano or organ, will not be considered. This limitation of the term Chamber Music is quite usual; but, in addition, we shall here omit music for more than eight instruments, and our attention will be mainly directed to compositions for two or more stringed instruments, with and without parts for the piano; only passing reference being made to those in which stringed instruments do not form the main constituents of the group, or in which there are parts for wind instruments.

Chamber Music, the execution of which is beyond the range of the moderately skilled amateur, will be only casually referred to, for excellent works exist on the subject of Chamber Music in general, especially those of Mr. N. Kilburn and of Mr. Thomas Dunhill. I am not aware of any work that especially instructs the amateur as to what Chamber Music is within his powers, what he may play with certainty of a fairly satisfactory result, what he may study and experiment with in reasonable hope of success, and what music it will only discourage him to attempt. Fortunately, a large amount of music exists for the enthusiastic amateur to select from, ranging from the quite easy to the moderately difficult, and these pages are in-

tended as an elementary guide to help the amateur as to what to select and incidentally what to avoid. Such a list would have been very useful to me in my earlier days, and may, I trust, prove so to my fellow-amateurs. It being borne in mind that the views expressed are those of one individual, I shall catalogue the compositions alluded to under three descriptions:—Easy, moderately difficult, and difficult: the two former being worthy of any amateur's attention, and the last requiring study and practice by all but exceptionally gifted amateurs. Arrangements of operatic, or other orchestral and vocal music for a few instruments are not true Chamber Music, and will not be considered. Overtures and operatic selections for performance by any two, three, or four instruments are only a little less ridiculous than the recorded arrangement of the Hallelujah Chorus for two flutes.

During a long life, in which music has been one of my chief recreations, I have collected a large library of Chamber Music; much of it useless to amateurs, either on account of its technical difficulty or its lack of æsthetic interest.

By purchasing music indiscriminately myself I have acquired many little-known gems and a lot of useless lumber.

Music is too expensive nowadays for one to be willing to buy it on chance, merely to try it over; but excellent catalogues of second-hand music are periodically issued by Mr. Harold Reeves, of Shaftesbury Avenue, London; by Mr. M. A. Middleton, of Bull Street, Birmingham; Mr. William Reeves, of London; Messrs. T. Holmes & Co., of Exmouth;

Messrs. Goodwin & Tabb, and others; and a request to these firms will ensure the receipt of their price lists. In addition, there are subscription libraries, such as that of Messrs. J. & W. Chester, of London, by means of which considerable quantities of Chamber Music may be experimented with before one makes a selection, and with no necessity to purchase. It is quite a fascinating study to take some of these second-hand catalogues and, with some musical dictionary, look up the history of the composers and their works. One finds how highly much of the music of composers, whose names are now unfamiliar, was esteemed by their contemporaries, and how it was considered to compete seriously with that of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and others, whose music is still generally regarded with affection. On many of the old copies our ancestors have written such verdicts as "Charming," "Very good," and so on. Tastes have changed, and we may not find most of the compositions either good or charming, but some of them are both; and it seems a pity that, as these old copies disappear, such music should be for ever lost. In order to perform some of this music of the last century our predecessors must have possessed considerable executive ability, and, in the piano parts especially, the amateur will find exacting tests for his talent. The Classical Chamber Music has been excellently reprinted in the Peters, Litolff, and Augener editions; from these, and second-hand catalogues, the amateur of limited means can obtain a good library at reasonable cost, if he knows what to select. A fair amount of Chamber Music is continually coming up for sale, as libraries and collections are

being broken up and dispersed; but the investing amateur will have to be careful, for much of the modern school of music is too difficult, and much of the older music is uninteresting to present-day taste. Some quite modern compositions will repay the amateur's study, and those that I have met with will be named; much that is omitted has been patiently tried in our circle and reluctantly resigned. The views expressed hereafter must be taken as personal to myself and my musical partners, and our only claim to consideration is that, for many years, we have practised together and tried to be unprejudiced. No composition in my library has been hereafter commended, nor omitted, in the trial of which the writer has not taken part during the fifty years he has cultivated the art. Of course, such limitation to one library and one set of amateurs makes the list very incomplete and the verdicts egotistic; this I confess and apologise for; the views are in good faith, and only offered for what such credentials may prove worthy—namely, the predilections of one set of amateurs; of amateurs in the etymological sense—lovers of music, in this case of Chamber Music. As in the case of amateur actors, the pleasure enjoyed by the performers is usually more obvious than in that of the audience, and these lines are written with no consideration for the listener; a composition may be very interesting to play and only wearisome to listen to; unless the audience be themselves players or are related, and therefore indulgent, to the executants. Chamber Music must be very well done to keep its hearers appreciative; but there must be few localities in which a few amateurs could not be

found to form circles for the practice of such music, and few more delightful exercises exist.

One of the avowed aims of the recently formed British Music Society is to introduce to one another musicians, professional and amateur, for the practice of Chamber Music and to aid in the formation of Chamber Music Circles. A practical acquaintance with Chamber Music enables the amateur to appreciate and enjoy the performance of more skilled executants at concerts of this class of music, and gives him help in practising his instrument, in studying his parts, and in developing his technique and his repertoire.

In the following chapters classical and well-known compositions will be little more than mentioned, in order that music little known, and in my view unduly neglected, may have attention.

The names of many of the authors quoted will be quite unknown to the present generation; they were unknown to me until I came across their works. Most of them are of the Victorian period, and it is the fashion to make this itself a reproach nowadays—in manners, in literature, and in art.

In these "Notes from a Library" many compositions deserving the amateur's regard are, no doubt, omitted; my library is far from complete, but the Chamber Music contained in it, to which I shall not allude, is more in bulk than the selection I have made in the following pages; and it must not be concluded that compositions which I do not name have not been tried by our circle. I am more concerned to catalogue what we consider of value to the amateur than what we have tried and found unsuitable.

As a viola player I am chiefly interested in compositions in which that instrument takes part, and such form the bulk of my library. I am aware that the amateur viola player has been described as a fiddler who has broken down; but I am not concerned to defend an instrument which is nowadays coming into its own and which was a favourite with Mendelssohn, Dvorak, and Brahms, and was the instrument of Beethoven's youth and played by him in the Elector's Orchestra.

What has suggested to me the arrangement of these notes from a music library was the experience that most of the amateurs I have met were unaware of much of the music available to them, music interesting to play and within their range. Many amateurs have personal experience of a very limited repertoire, possibly confined to the fifteen celebrated (so-called) string quartets of Haydn, some of those of Mozart and Beethoven, and possibly the Chamber Music of Schubert and Schumann, with a few of the classical trios. After playing these, they have been tempted to try modern Chamber Music, and, finding they can make little of it, they become discouraged and fall back on arrangements and selections—an easy and a tragic descent. Such amateurs are commonly unaware that there is a large amount of Chamber Music available which is tuneful and delightful to play, and does not demand an executive skill beyond that possessed by a majority of amateurs.

Among the less-known composers, whose works are generally deserving the consideration of the amateur, may be specially mentioned the following:—

VIOTTI (1753-1824), an Italian virtuoso on the violin, a pupil of Pugnani, and much of whose varied career was spent in London, where he set up as a wine merchant and where he died. His concertos for the violin are still occasionally performed in public, but his Chamber Music is little known, though the string quartets, trios, and duos are all melodious and interesting.

IGNACE PLEYEL (1757-1831) was Haydn's favourite pupil, and this master thought highly of his pupil's compositions. He was a prolific writer of operas and symphonies, as well as of Chamber Music. The string duos and trios are valuable to the student in his early days, and some of the quartets are worthy of attention, especially until the amateurs have acquired decided technical skill.

J. L. DUSSEK (1759-1812) is an example of a composer whose music had considerable vogue in the latter part of last century, but is rarely heard of to-day. Haydn regarded this remarkable musician highly, and for many years his works were very popular. All young pianists used to play the piece entitled "Consolation," and the famous Arabella Goddard performed his piano sonatas at the Monday Popular and other concerts. Joachim, Neruda, and Strauss played the violin sonatas constantly—more than twenty times at the Popular Concerts alone. His string quartets, piano quintet and piano quartet were frequently produced and often by public desire.

FRANZ KROMMER (1760-1831) is now chiefly remembered by his valuable music for wind instruments, but

he composed a number of string trios, quartets, and quintets, which were extremely popular in Vienna, and are still of interest to-day.

PRINCE LOUIS FERDINAND OF PRUSSIA (1772-1806) was a talented amateur, and found time in his exciting life to perform and compose. This Prince was a nephew of Frederick the Great—himself no mean amateur on the flute—and he was a talented pianist and a composer of some merit. Prince Ferdinand, killed at the Battle of Saalfeld, was a pupil and friend of Dussek, who dedicated his Piano Quartet, Op. 56, to him. Beethoven and Ries have both recorded their high opinion of the Prince's talents, and Beethoven dedicated to him his third Piano Concerto, Op. 37. The Prince's Piano Quintet in F minor is quite a fine work.

J. N. HUMMEL (1778-1837), one of the few pupils of Mozart, has left us a large quantity of Chamber Music. As might be expected from so renowned an expert upon the piano, this instrument is, in most of his compositions, entrusted with a much more exigent part than are the strings. Hummel's Chamber Music was widely popular in the first half of the last century, and it is remarkable, in glancing through old concert programmes, to notice how often his works recur which are now as remarkably neglected.

KARL REISSIGER (1798-1859) wrote a large quantity of music, amongst it a good deal for the chamber. Much of his music is open to the charge of being sugary and trivial, which means it is melodious and not technically very difficult. Amateurs who may play and enjoy his compositions will not adjudge his sweet-

ness and light as the crimes the modern critic describes them to be.

The brothers FRANZ and IGNACE LACHNER, who lived through most of the nineteenth century, have left Chamber Music very useful to amateurs. Franz was a particular friend of Schubert's, and was the more valuable composer of the brothers, but viola players are specially indebted to Ignace for some very tuneful trios for violin, viola, and piano. One of the pupils of Franz Lachner,

JOSEPH RHEINBERGER, still obtains some recognition from many amateurs.

J. N. ELLERTON (1807-1873), a London amateur who also composed, has deserved remembrance by his successors when they meet for chamber practice; many of his string quartets are quite clever, and some of these, as well as his piano trios, have been republished in the Augener Edition.

GEORGE ONSLOW (1784-1852) was another amateur musician and composer, whose works often appear on second-hand catalogues, and have their admirers. The acid test of time has rendered ludicrous some contemporary estimates of his compositions. At his death, the *Revue Musicale*, of Paris, declared:—"His rich series of instrumental works has placed George Onslow almost in the same rank with his illustrious progenitors Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven."

F. E. FESCA (1789-1826), distinguished as a violinist, has written Chamber Music of graceful and melodious content.

A. FESCA, son of the above, only lived to be twenty-nine years old, but in his short life composed

some very tuneful Chamber Music, well within the range of amateurs.

EBENEZER PROUT, a learned musician and theorist, who followed Sullivan at the Royal Academy of Music, has written some very delightful Chamber Music; his profound knowledge of theory would, no doubt, have enabled him to compose music of excruciating difficulty, but he did not disdain to produce music which the majority of amateurs can tackle.

S. JADASSOHN (1831-1902) was another learned theorist and a professor of the Leipsic Conservatoire; he has put amateurs deeply in his debt for much tuneful and feasible Chamber Music.

It will surprise some, that composers whose names are only generally associated with the production of operas, were also responsible for Chamber Music.

WEBER's Piano Quartet is well known, but string quartets by DONIZETTI and four by ROSSINI were performed at the Monday Populars with success, and a quartet by VERDI obtained some celebrity, as did a piano trio by BALFE.

These are but a few of the composers whose works are, unfortunately, unknown to many amateurs; others will be referred to in later pages. I am not suggesting that these old masters are not known to some musicians, but I do assert that many others have not even heard their names.

I seek to disarm criticism by owning to mistakes and to an old-fashioned standard of taste. In the sister arts of painting and violin-making, the old masters produced effects the moderns cannot excel to-

day, and my view is that the same verdict applies to musical composition.

Finally, I disclaim any idea of informing or even interesting the professional musician or the musical critic. I am a humble amateur, and these disjointed notes must be taken for all they profess to be, namely, "Hints to Amateurs."

CHAPTER II.

THE STRING QUARTET.

The quartet for strings includes the greater part of the Chamber Music in existence, and is the most popular form for private practice and for concert purposes. It may be that four parts are about as many as the ordinary ear can satisfactorily attend to; but it appears to be agreed that the quartet is the ideal combination, and especially that for four stringed instruments. Robert Louis Stevenson put it on record that wealth had no attraction for him beyond that it could obtain for him a yacht and a string quartet. The usual group is for two violins, alto and 'cello, and, in this chapter, any variation from this combination will be particularised. Although string quartets were written before his day, it is to Joseph Haydn that the quartet, as we know it, owes its general form and many of its finest examples. Earlier quartets by A. Scarlatti, P. E. Bach, Dittersdorf, and others still exist, but the string quartet practically dates from 1755, when Haydn wrote his first, and before 1809, when he died, eighty-three string quartets came from his desk and formed models after which Mozart, Beethoven, and others designed their quartets. Of Haydn's quartets, a selection of fifteen, labelled "celebrated," is issued in the cheap form of the Peters Edition, and

a set of twenty in the Litolf Edition; these are all excellent, and have been the chief resort of generations of amateurs; but many of the best are not contained in these selected examples, and the whole eighty-three are worthy of study and use. In second-hand catalogues well-bound complete editions are repeatedly appearing, and one of these should be secured for every Chamber Music circle. The early quartets are rather sketchy, and in many the first-violin part is rather out of proportion, in prominence and difficulty, to that for the other instruments. There is a tendency to-day to disparage and neglect these quartets on the part of skilled executants, both professional and amateur; but a friend of the writer's once heard the great Joachim reprove this tendency, and declare that it was anything but easy to play a Haydn quartet as it should be played. When one thinks of the immense numbers who have enjoyed playing, and have learned to love, these quartets during the last century and a-half one gets an impression of part of the debt we owe to Papa Haydn.

There is a regrettable variety in the numbering of Haydn's quartets; there is a French method, a German method, and even a third, while the opus numbers vary in different editions. My own excellent edition was published by the firm of Pleyel in Paris, and is dedicated to the First Consul, Bonaparte. It is interesting to notice in the list of subscribers to this edition, among kings, princes, and dukes, the names of Cherubini, Grétry, Kreutzer, Lesueur, Méhul, Rode, Rouget-de-lisle, Dussek, Solomon, Viotti, Boccherini, Razoumowski, Esterhazy, Pichl, and others famous in

musical history. The numbers quoted by me refer to those in this edition, in which it is stated that they follow the order in which the quartets appeared. The amateur's attention is especially directed to Nos. 5, 9, 26, 38, 57 to 68, and 72 to 80. It is not probable that any of his quartets were given titles by Haydn himself, but affection and custom have conferred names on some of them. No. 17 (Op. 3, No. 5) has been entitled "The Serenade" from the style of its andante; No. 59 (Op. 54, No. 3) has been doubly labelled "The Horseman" and "The Frog," as suggested by its rhythm; No. 63 is "The Lark"; No. 76 is another specimen that has been endowed with two titles—namely, "The Quinten" and "The Donkey," the bray being obvious in its finale; No. 77 (Op. 76, No. 3) is the "Emperor," from its variations on the famous hymn; while No. 78 is known as "The Rising Sun," from a fanciful outburst, less sudden than the crash which has named the "Surprise" Symphony. Another quartet has been labelled "The Razor" quartet, from a legend that Haydn gave this composition in exchange for a sharp razor of which he was in need.

Titles to compositions, which are unauthorized by the composers and even unknown to them, are not always desirable additions, but in many cases they are evidence of popular appreciation. Such names, or even nicknames, are often terms of endearment, and may be suggested by the general atmosphere of the work, or merely by some peculiarity of only a bar or two. It is a natural instinct to give some pet name to distinguish a thing of which one is fond, and such

is the case with some of Mendelssohn's *Lieder-ohne-Worte*, some of Beethoven's sonatas, and some of Haydn's quartets, as, for example, "The Bees' Wedding," the "Moonlight Sonata," and the "Frog Quartet." This practice is quite distinct from the use of titles supplied by composers themselves to some of their works. In this latter case the names are intended to suggest the mood or programme in which the work was written, or is to be listened to, and no doubt such titles do help one to realize and recognize a composition, as, for example, the "*Cathédrale Engloutie*" and "*L'Après-midi d'un Faune*" of Debussy, and the "*Til Eulenspiegel*" of Richard Strauss, which can hardly be properly appreciated unless one has the author's title in mind.

With or without titles Haydn's quartets have been the amateur's chief stand-by ever since they appeared and the records of professional performance in London for over fifty years contain more string quartets of Haydn than of any other composer. As a distinguished critic of the last century wrote, "When the time shall arrive that the name of Haydn appears not in the programme of classical concerts, we shall take up our pens and write the Epitaph of Music."

Joseph's brother, Michael Haydn, wrote quartets, some of which are still occasionally performed in public, especially in Austria.

MOZART is said to have composed 32 quartets for strings of which, however, five were merely arrangements of fugues by Bach, two had parts for the flute and one for the oboe. The usual editions consist of twenty-three, all of which are worthy of the amateur's

affection, especially the six dedicated to Haydn and the three dedicated to the King of Prussia. The Litolf edition is cheap and clearly printed, and, as numbered in this edition, Nos. 8 to 23 are all deserving of study; frequent playing together of the parts is necessary to develop the light, shade, and expression of which they are capable. Except one or two of Beethoven's, no finer quartets exist.

BEETHOVEN wrote sixteen string quartets, though often, as in Litolf's excellent edition, the Fugue, Op. 133, is included as a seventeenth. The six included under Op. 18 and the three in Op. 59, as well as the so-called Harp Quartet, Op. 74, are all possible to the amateur, and deserving of his study and frequent performance. The last six quartets are in what is known as Beethoven's third manner, and a satisfactory rendering is beyond the amateur, however interesting these prove to listen to when performed by a skilled quartet of experts.

None is really easy to play, and of Op. 59, No. 1, in F major, it is reported that the celebrated composer and 'cello virtuoso, Bernard Romberg, threw the 'cello part on the floor and stamped on it in rage, declaring it unplayable; he ought to have been an authority on unplayable 'cello parts, from what my 'cello friends say of these parts in his own quartets.

SCHUBERT is credited with having written twenty string quartets, but of these only seven and a movement from an eighth are published in the modern editions. All of these are charming and grateful to play, especially Op. 125 and the two posthumous quartets in D minor and G minor, as well as the

unfinished eighth. Much of Schubert's instrumental music we owe to the influence of Schumann and Mendelssohn and to the research carried out by George Grove and Arthur Sullivan among the papers left behind at Schubert's death; much of it was never printed in his lifetime, and he probably never heard the works performed in public. These fortunately rescued treasures include the C major and the Unfinished Symphonies, and among the Chamber Music, besides the three last string quartets, the String Trio in B flat, the quintet Op. 163, and the lovely octet for wind and strings, Op. 118.

SCHUMANN'S Chamber Music written to include the piano is more popular with amateurs than that for strings only. The three string quartets are, however, quite deserving of study, and are not so easy that study is superfluous.

MENDELSSOHN composed seven string quartets, of which, however, the seventh is only a fragment found among his posthumous papers along with the completed sixth quartet. The first quartet contains the charming Canzonetta, one of the first of this composer's productions to capture the popular taste. The two first quartets, Op. 12 and Op. 13, were among the works produced between the age of fourteen and sixteen, together with the three piano quartets, the first string quintet and the octet for strings; this example of precocity in music has been excelled in the history of the art by Mozart alone.

Mendelssohn's string quartets have not retained their early popularity, and are considered too orchestral in plan, but the amateur will find them melodious

and interesting. The Peter's edition is an excellent one.

Leaving Brahms, Dvorak, and other more recent composers for the present, the works of the six composers mentioned form the classics in the amateur's library of quartets, but there are a number of old-time composers whose quartets are well worthy of his consideration. Many of them were very popular in their day, but are now neglected; they never appear on concert programmes, but may be picked up from second-hand dealers and at the sale of music libraries, and many of them are well deserving of this.

W. PICHL (1741-1805), of Vienna, composed a considerable quantity of Chamber Music; some of his string quartets and duets are worthy of preservation, and some have been republished fairly recently.

L. BOCCHERINI (1743-1805) wrote ninety-one string quartets, some of which are still played at concerts on the Continent. His quintets are better known.

L. B. VIOTTI composed a number of quartets, of which some are deserving of practice and some are rather difficult. The three in Simrock's edition, dedicated to his brother, A. Viotti, are especially interesting.

J. PLEYEL's quartets are numerous, and are technically easy to play; they are worthy the consideration of amateurs who have not yet advanced far in skill.

CHERUBINI (1760-1842) produced a large number of quartets. In German music schools these are still in the student's curriculum, but they are seldom tried in this country. The three published in the Peter's edition are especially deserving of attention.

FRANZ KROMMER, a distinguished violinist and composer, wrote much Chamber Music; that for wind instruments was once in much esteem. His string quartets are of quite distinct difficulty, but are of interest, especially, perhaps, No. 3, Op. 34.

ANDREAS ROMBERG (1767-1821), violinist and composer, left a number of quartets, but the parts for the first violin are very difficult, while in those dedicated to his brother Bernard, a professional 'cellist, the parts for the 'cello are quite difficult, as they are in the quartets written by BERNARD ROMBERG himself. But for being all top and bottom, so to speak, the quartets of the brothers would be more satisfactory; they are still worth attention where the second violin and viola are comparatively indifferent performers.

J. N. HUMMEL composed much useful Chamber Music, and amongst this a number of string quartets, of which three, Op. 30, are good. His best works of the class, however, are those in which the piano takes part.

GEORGE ONSLOW (1784-1852) composed thirty-one string quartets and even more quintets; some of these are still played, and have a reputation which my experience does not support. The 'cello parts are generally very exacting; these parts he played himself at the frequent concerts at his French home.

LUDWIG SPOHR'S (1784-1859) Chamber Music is still in request, and some of it is very beautiful. The first violin part is generally too prominent, rendering the quartets practically a concerto with a string accompaniment. This character is less evident in the three lovely quartets labelled Op. 4. It is, perhaps, difficult

for a brilliant virtuoso to pay regard to technical exigencies in writing for his own instrument, and May-seder's Chamber Music is therefore of a similar character.

GLINKA, the Russian operatic composer, wrote some very tuneful Chamber Music, including two string quartets. The one labelled Op. 74 is a delightful work. The brothers LACHNER, among their numerous compositions, include some string quartets. Of those by FRANZ, I possess several, and can especially recommend Op. 75; of the younger brother, IGNACE, the quartet, Op. 105, is particularly melodious, as are the quartets for four violins, Op. 107, and for three violins and viola, Op. 106.

J. B. VAN BREE, a Dutch violinist and composer still known in Britain by his masses and a cantata, has written several charming quartets, especially one in E flat, though all three in the same series are quite good.

J. L. ELLERTON wrote forty-four string quartets, of which twenty-one are in my library. These are interesting, and many of them quite original in character. They vary in value, but the amateur will not regret securing the three in Op. 122 as well as those numbered Op. 102 and Op. 76.

B. MOLIQUE, a violinist and composer long resident and esteemed in this country, who performed at, and some of whose works were produced at, the Monday "Pops," has at least one quartet worthy of attention, namely, Op. 42 in B flat major.

Coming to composers of more recent times, we have two quartets by the Bohemian composer

SMETANA (1824-1884), of which the one in E minor, entitled "Aus meinem Leben" and contained in the Peter's Library, is a beautiful work; it is quite difficult, but is worthy the study of amateurs, and will repay such, which is more than I can assert of the other quartet.

TSCHAIKOVSKY'S (1840-1893) Op. 11 is a charming work and within the range of amateurs, which can hardly be said of Op. 30. In the earlier quartet the slow movement is an inspiration, and one never tires of it.

EBENEZER PROUT'S string quartet, Op. 1, is an attractive composition; it is entitled the "Prize" Quartet, and there are quartets by DANCLA and PERRY bearing the same name and both deserving attention.

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897) only composed three string quartets; they are worthy the amateur's study, but are difficult to execute. No. 3, Op. 67, affords opportunities for the performer on the viola, a grateful part being allotted to that instrument so commonly neglected by earlier composers. The amateur will never be able to execute these three quartets as they should be played, but the effort will do him no harm.

ANTON DVORAK has composed much Chamber Music very grateful to the amateur. There are eight string quartets, and my favourites are Op. 34, 51, 61, and 96. All Dvorak's Chamber Music can be utilized by good amateurs, but the rhythm is often very tricky, and the first violin must be at home among the upper ledger lines.

A. GRETCHANINOFF is chiefly known by his songs;

his quartet, Op. 2, is a magnificent specimen with a motto or *leit-motif* referred to in each of the four movements. The whole quartet is very melodious and not too exacting; it may be criticized as attempting orchestral effects with too limited a medium; but, in my view, it is one of the best quartets for amateurs with which I am acquainted, and is especially kind to the viola.

The string quartet in A major by RICHARD STRAUSS is excellent, and, being so early a work, Op. 2, it was composed before this artist developed his advanced style.

BORODIN's two quartets, No. 1 in A and No. 2 in D major, are very tuneful and within amateur powers; the nocturne in the latter is a charming movement.

Without particularizing, I add a list of string quartets which I and my amateur friends have tried with profit and pleasure, in addition to those referred to already:—

Rossini (three).

Davaux, Op. 9.

Griesbacher (two).

Halberstadt, Op. 4.

Dreyschöck, Op. 105.

J. von Blumenthal, Op. 38 and 40.

Rheinberger, Op. 89.

Arensky, Op. 35a.

Glazounov, Suite, Op. 35, and the two books entitled "Les Vendredis," by Glazounov and others.

Of string quartets by modern British composers, we have tried specimens by Elgar, Stanford, Coleridge-Taylor, Friskin, Goossens, F. Bridge, Percy Grainger, Howells, Hurlstone, Mackenzie, McEwen, and others; more talented executants may have better results than we have achieved.

With Hurlstone's Phantasy Quartet we have been fairly successful, and we did respectably with the three arrangements of popular airs by Frank Bridge, namely, "Irish Melody," "Sally in our Alley," and "Cherry Ripe," and with the variations on "Molly on the Shore" by Percy Grainger.

CHAPTER III.

PIANO AND STRING QUARTETS.

Probably the piano quartet is the next most popular combination to the quartet for strings in the domestic Chamber Music circle. This is not ideally so satisfactory a group as is the latter, and the modern piano is so assertive an instrument that it must be used with discretion in the performance of music of which much was originally written for its weaker ancestors. Capable pianists are much more easily found than are skilled performers on stringed instruments, and there is much beautiful Chamber Music for the combination. In many piano quartets the part entrusted to the piano is too dominant, and it is often of greater difficulty than the other parts; fortunately, pianists for whom difficulties have no terrors are fairly easily secured. The usual arrangement is for piano, violin, viola, and 'cello; where this is departed from, such will be noted. HAYDN, the father of the string quartet, wrote no piano quartet of interest.

MOZART composed the first piano quartets that preserve their value to-day. In the Litolff edition are five, of which the first in G minor and the next in E flat major are the best and are tuneful throughout.

In the same edition are four quartets by Beethoven—all of them deserving of performance, but only No. 4, an arrangement from Op. 16, a quintet for piano and wind, is really worthy of the composer of the great string quartets.

SCHUMANN only composed one piano quartet, Op. 47, but this is one of the finest yet produced, and is within the range of capable amateurs. It is, perhaps, not so outstanding a gem, among similar compositions, as the same composer's piano quintet, Op. 44, but it runs it close. The melodies of the first movement and the 'cello introduction to the andante are charming; while, when familiarity enables the performers to take the scherzo and vivace at expert speed, nothing more gay and sprightly can be imagined.

Amongst the posthumous MSS. of SCHUBERT, which include his two best string quartets, there were also found two movements of a piano quartet, adagio and rondo, the string parts of which are simple and melodious, while the piano part is rather difficult.

Three of the earliest compositions by MENDELSSOHN are piano quartets; they are reproduced in the Litolf edition, and will be found of interest; but it is not very obvious nowadays why they were so popular with professionals and amateurs in Mendelssohn's day and afterwards.

Two of the piano quartets of DUSSEK, Op. 46 and 53, are still worthy of attention, as are some of the early works of the prolific PLEYEL and of A. ROMBERG, which need not be further particularized.

F. KUHLAU, an expert pianist and flautist to whom flute players owe much music, also wrote a number

of piano quartets, of which Op. 32, 50, and 108 may be especially recommended, but the parts for the piano are quite difficult.

C. M. WEBER's piano quartet is a favourite with amateurs, and is the only Chamber Music of this operatic composer that is played nowadays.

C. CZERNY, the pianist known to generations of budding pianists by his exercises, composed some playable quartets.

KARL REISSIGER left a mass of Chamber Music, of which the string parts are reasonably easy and the piano parts reasonably difficult. Any of his piano quartets or quintets occurring in the second-hand market may be secured with confidence by the amateur. A similar description applies to the compositions of J. N. HUMMEL, and the posthumous piano quartet, No. 4, is especially grateful.

W. B. MOLIQUE, renowned as a leader of Chamber Music, was also a composer of merit, and his piano quartet, Op. 71, is charming and playable.

REINECKE, a composer and conductor born in 1824, has written melodious Chamber Music, of which the piano quartet, Op. 34, is one of the most successful.

A. FESCA. Of all piano quartets for amateurs, two by A. Fesca, Op. 26 and Op. 28, are perhaps the easiest to play without being trivial; they are remarkably melodious, and may even be performed before a friendly audience—a test which more difficult compositions might not bear so well.

Before coming to more modern composers, a short list of comparatively ancient quartets still worthy of attention may include the following:—

G. Krug, Op. 11 and Op. 13.

L. Wolff, Op. 15.

H. Staehle, Op. 1.

J. F. Dupont, Op. 6.

F. Kiel, Op. 44.

H. Lenss, Op. 10.

L. de St. Lubin, Op. 48.

F. Schneider, Op. 34 and Op. 36.

For two violins, 'cello and piano few interesting examples exist, but there are some by Corelli and by J. Stamitz which may find favour.

Among comparatively modern composers BRAHMS again stands out prominently; Op. 25, 26, and 60 are all worthy the labour required to perform them decently.

E. PROUT's two quartets, Op. 2 and Op. 18, should not be neglected by self-respecting amateurs.

DVORAK wrote two piano quartets, of which Op. 23 is very melodious and quite grateful for amateurs to play; the other, Op. 87, we have not found quite so satisfactory.

JOSEPH RHEINBERGER's piano quartet, Op. 38, is more commonly found in the amateur's repertory than many of those above mentioned, and deservedly so.

GABRIEL FAURÉ, a Parisian composer of the present day, has written one quartet that no amateur should miss; it is numbered Op. 15, and is not at all ultra-modern in design nor difficulty.

Among British piano quartets suitable for amateur performance I know of none so satisfactory as the Op. 34 in E major by Gerard Cobb. It is delightful

throughout, although modern enough in idiom with a restrained use of rhythmic variations.

O! SI SIC OMNIA!

The phantasy quartet by Frank Bridge and that in E minor by W. Hurlstone and in B minor by Thomas Dunhill are all possible to amateurs; these and many others may be more satisfactorily interpreted by more skilful amateurs than has been the case in our own music circle.

CHAPTER IV.

TRIOS.

STRINGS :—

With few exceptions, string trios do not compare favourably with the existing string quartets. It would seem that four-part writing is more satisfactory than that for three instruments, and the additional violin makes a distinct improvement in the balance. The usual string trio group is violin, viola, and 'cello, and any variation from this will be noted.

HAYDN'S string trios are almost negligible; they are easy, but are uninteresting; of his contemporary composer, PLEYEL, several are quite good, especially the three, Op. 11, which have been republished in the Litolf edition.

MOZART'S trio in E flat, labelled *Divertimento*, remains the favourite with amateurs; it is charming all through and not difficult to perform. It is a lengthy composition with two minuets of a Haydn character, and a lovely *andante*; in my view, nothing more simply delightful than the first movement has yet been written for the three instruments.

It is to BEETHOVEN, however, that the string trio repertoire is most indebted; he composed five, of which the fifth is the well-known *Serenade*, also arranged for violin, 'cello, and piano; all five are models for three-

part writing, especially Op. 3 in E flat and Op. 9, No. 3.

SCHUBERT has left two string trios, both valuable to the amateur, especially No. 2 in B flat. This trio was one of the works found among Schubert's papers after his death, and probably never was performed in public until played from MSS. at a Monday "Pop." in February, 1869.

ALESSANDRO ROLLA wrote a number of string trios, melodious and interesting; they are quite difficult enough, especially the parts for the 'cello, but are worth securing for practice, as are several by the composer LINDPAINTER.

In my experience, the best trio for strings, after Mozart's Divertimento, is, up to the present, the Op. 69 of WILHELM BERGER; it is tuneful and only moderately difficult, while each instrument has a full and interesting part to play. In addition, there are trios by KROMMER and GIARDINI worthy of attention, if less so than those previously mentioned.

For two violins and 'cello a large number of compositions exist, and are well represented in my library. We have tried many of them by Handel, Haydn, Pleyel, Corelli, Viotti, and others, but only those by Corelli, Pleyel, and Viotti have proved of interest. The same lack of interest may be reported of trios for two violins and viola, with one exception, Dvorak's Terzetto, Op. 74, which is a very fine work and grateful to each instrument. The next best trios for these instruments in my possession are Op. 112 by R. Hofman, in Augener's edition, and the so-called seventh trio by Beethoven, Op. 55.

The string trio is not a form that appears to appeal extensively to modern composers. I have heard some performed and others praised, but have no personal experience of them; two by Herzogenberg are well reported upon. A single movement by the Roumanian composer, ENESCO, named *Aubade*, is a dainty little composition, and introduces the Roumanian National Anthem.

TRIOS FOR STRINGS AND PIANO:—

The usual combination is violin, 'cello, and piano, and such will be first considered. Although, as with the string quartets, Papa Haydn was not the earliest composer in this form, his piano trios are the first historically that remain deserving of consideration at the present day.

HAYDN composed thirty such trios, of which six are included in the Litolff edition and twelve in a Peter's volume. Of these, No. 1 in G major, No. 4 in D major, and No. 12 in E flat major are the best; in the others the string parts are rather thin, especially those for the 'cello.

MOZART'S seven piano trios, also in the Litolff edition, are an advance in balance, and are very dainty compositions, especially No. 3 in G and the second one, Op. 14, No. 2, in which the viola replaces the 'cello.

It is when we come to BEETHOVEN that we find in his Op. 97 in B flat major what can be done with three instruments, and this trio is still frequently performed at Chamber Concerts, and is probably the finest trio that exists. Of the eleven in the Peter's

edition, after Op. 97, the favourites are Op. 1 (No. 3), Op. 11 and Op. 70.

Of SCHUBERT'S two piano trios (Peters), No. 1, Op. 99, is a delightful work and still popular. No. 2, Op. 100, is less charming, but in both the string parts are more enterprising than in earlier trios and are of respectable difficulty.

There are four trios by SCHUMANN, of which I am only practically acquainted with Op. 63 and the Phantasestücke, Op. 88; they are fine, but not to compare with his piano quartet and quintet.

MENDELSSOHN composed two piano trios, which have both been long popular with amateurs, although not really easy to reproduce. No. 1, Op. 49, is a magnificent work with an impressive opening for the violoncello. Schumann described it as "the great trio of our day," and adds that in it the composer "must surely now have well-nigh reached the climax of his career." This trio is worthy to rank with Schubert's No. 1, and even with the No. 7 of Beethoven. The second trio, Op. 66, is also a very fine work.

J. N. HUMMEL composed a considerable number of piano trios, of which seven are reprinted in the Peter's and Litolff editions. These are all melodious and straightforward; the string parts are quite easy, but, as might be expected from so famous a virtuoso on the piano, this instrument has much more to do. These trios can be confidently recommended to amateurs, before they can safely aspire to Beethoven or Brahms. The trio, No. 1 in E flat major, is the one specially suited to the amateur, and even at professional concerts in the latter part of the last century

this first trio, No. 5 (Op. 83) and No. 6 (Op. 93) used frequently to be performed.

A. FESCA wrote six trios, all deserving trial, and REISSIGER wrote a large number, all feasible and pleasing.

JADASSOHN'S trios are of a similar character, and from personal trial I can strongly recommend four of these, Op. 16, 20, 59, and 85; especially is Op. 16 a charming little trio. Many of the above trios occur in the list of reproductions by Peters and Litolff. The inexperienced student of Chamber Music will owe a debt to these composers if he will try their works, and, as he develops in knowledge and skill, he will, no doubt, regard his early friends with a tolerant pity and consider them trivial and pretty and even Victorian. There is a trio in A major by BALFE, once popular and still deserving to be so.

GADE'S Noveletten and the trio in F, Op. 42, will repay the amateur's attention.

My library contains a considerable number of piano trios which I have enjoyed listening to when performed by friends, amateur and professional. My violin technique is too indifferent for me to offer a personal opinion as to the suitability of some of them for ordinary amateur use. For the following list I temporarily relax the plan of only recommending to my fellow-amateurs what I have myself taken part in, and suggest piano trios by:—

F. Kiel.

J. Raff—especially Op. 100, Op. 102, and Op. 110.

Dussek in F major.

Dvorak—all four, especially that in B flat, Op. 21, and the Dumka trio, Op. 90.

Sterndale Bennett in A major.

Tschaikovsky, Op. 50.

Brahms, Op. 87 and Op. 101.

Arensky in D minor, Op. 32.

I pass on to trios, of which I have been an assiduous collector, namely:—

TRIOS FOR VIOLIN, VIOLA, AND PIANO.

For these three instruments MOZART wrote the one trio, Op. 14, No. 2, charming throughout and all so simply produced, from the lovely opening Andante to the Haydnish Minuet with its dainty trio and on to the sunny allegretto—all easy, but sufficient. However often played, it is never wearisome, and each performance reveals new beauties. The Sinfonie Concertante for violin and viola accompanied by a small orchestra, Mozart's Op. 104, makes a fine trio with the pianoforte replacing the orchestra.

SCHUMANN's four fairy-tales, Op. 132, written for clarinet, viola, and piano, as well as for violin, viola, and piano, are sufficiently feasible for the amateur's attention. Our old friend PLEYEL, to whom the amateur in his early days owes so much, has not forgotten the combination under review, and one amateur at least is still grateful to him for the three trios in Op. 44.

Perhaps, however, the amateur viola player is more indebted to the IGNACE LACHNER previously referred to, than to any other composer for trios for

violin, viola, and piano. There are six, well worthy of inclusion in any viola player's library and frequently found in second-hand catalogues; of these, Op. 102 and Op. 103 are also contained in the Augener edition.

VIEUXTEMPS, Op. 39, is rather difficult, but repays practice.

JENSEN, Op. 27, a phantasie for the three instruments, is moderately easy.

LECLAIR'S Sonata is old-fashioned, but still interesting.

SCHARWENKA'S Op. 105 and the series of seven phantasies by R. FUCHS, Op. 57, deserve attention.

EDELE has written one very tuneful trio, Op. 2, and J. L. WOLF an excellent one, Op. 6; while a suite by D. PAQUE, Op. 27, can be strongly recommended.

Among the moderns, the Phantasie, Op. 36, by T. DUNHILL is a decided acquisition, and, despite the composer being a virtuoso performer, he has been merciful to all three instruments. Even MAX REGER has written in his Op. 2 a trio which, though not easy, is possible to the amateur and decidedly melodious; he corrected these blemishes in later opera.

I lately heard a trio in B flat for the instruments in question by Alfred Wall, of Newcastle, which I understand is only in MS. at present; it appeared a remarkable work; it is intended it shall be published, and we must hope it will prove to be within amateur range.

Of TRIOS FOR TWO VIOLINS AND PIANO there are two sets in the Peter's edition, namely, three by J. S. BACH and a suite by MOSKOWSKI, Op. 71; the Bach trios are moderately, and the suite quite, difficult, but

all are interesting. There are a number of slighter trios for this combination in my library not especially remarkable.

BRAHMS has two trios which amateur enthusiasts may like to work at, viz., Op. 40 for viola (or horn), violin, and piano, and Op. 114 for viola (or clarinet), 'cello, and piano.

CHAPTER V.

QUINTETS.

STRINGS :—

The most usual combination is for two violins, two violas, and a 'cello.

Formerly one viola and two 'cellos were frequently employed, as in over one hundred quintets by Boccherini. A third group is for two violins, viola, 'cello, and bass. We will consider quintets for the more usual combination first.

Here, again, MOZART is the amateur's chief resort; the ten he composed are contained in two volumes of the Peter's edition; of these, No. 9 was originally written for clarinet, two violins, viola, and 'cello, but has been adapted for the string quintet, and is a beautiful composition. No. 10 was composed for horn, violin, two violas, and 'cello, and has been arranged for violin, two violas, and two 'cellos, and it does not form quite so interesting a work. Of the first eight, all are charming, especially Nos. 3 and 6; the latter in particular, in G minor, is a delightful study.

In the Peter's edition also we find four string quintets by BEETHOVEN; of these, two are adaptations from other compositions, and the fourth is only one short

movement in the form of a fugue; they are all interesting, but not to be compared with his string quartets nor with Mozart's quintets. The one in C major, Op. 29, is, however, a fine work, the finale being quite a wonderful movement, twice interrupted by an *andante con moto*.

MENDELSSOHN composed two quintets; the first one was written before he was seventeen years of age, and the second twenty years later, being only published after his death at the age of thirty-eight. These quintets were frequently performed at Chamber Concerts fifty years ago; indeed, the second one, Op. 87, was the first piece on the programme of the first of the Monday Popular series of Chamber Music concerts in February, 1859, with Wieniawski and Piatti in the group. This concert was entirely devoted to the music of Mendelssohn. Both those quintets are playable by amateurs.

Of SPOHR's string quintets, Nos. 1 and 2 of Op. 33 will repay the attention of amateurs.

Several quintets by W. H. VEIT, a Bohemian composer, are not difficult and deserve trial.

Of DVORAK's three string quintets, Op. 97 is known as the Nigger Quintet, because, as in the Nigger Quartet, Op. 96, there is a resemblance in the melodies to songs of the American negro; this quintet is not easy, but will repay study. Of the other two, Op. 77 requires the bass instead of the second viola, and neither will appeal to the amateur as does Op. 97.

Of the three quintets by BRAHMS (Op. 115 being for clarinet or second viola), the amateur will find them all difficult to produce. Op. 88 will be nearest to

his range, and the viola player has a fine part. Like Dvorak, Brahms played the viola, and both are kind to the instrument. When practice together has enabled the amateur circle to perform Op. 88 passably well, they may, greatly daring, tackle the other two; but the quartets and quintets of Brahms are only possible to very good amateurs, and even they will find them require laborious study.

Of quintets for two violins, viola, and two 'cellos, some of those by BOCCHERINI are still played; in one of these occurs the popular minuet. The six in Op. 20 are the best. REISSIGER's Op. 90 is deserving a trial; but the best work for this combination known to me practically is SCHUBERT's Op. 163, a remarkable work throughout.

For quintets for two violins, viola, 'cello, and bass a large number composed by George Onslow appear repeatedly in second-hand catalogues; the few I have taken part in have not impressed me.

Brahms's Liebeslieder Waltzes have been arranged by Hermann for the same ensemble, and are easy and satisfactory.

PIANO AND STRINGS:—

The amateur's repertory of string quintets is a restricted one; but when we come to the combination of the piano with the string quartet, there is considerable choice. And here SCHUMANN's one quintet, Op. 44, outshines any composition for these instruments that has been produced before or since that composer's day. The piano part is rather unduly prominent, but the string parts are within the range of ordinary ama-

teurs. The second trio of the scherzo is a bit of a nut for the amateur to crack,, with its clouds of accidentals and its double flats. Although he has only this one quintet to his credit, Schumann has almost as deserving a right to the title of father of the piano quintet as Haydn has to that of parent of the string quartet or Mozart of the string quintet. However taste and fashion in music may change, however modern we may become, surely this lovely work will never be neglected. Of course, numerous quintets for piano and strings were written before Schumann's day, and some by Haydn and by Boccherini are easy if not specially interesting. The PRINCE LOUIS FERDINAND, previously referred to, composed two works of this class worthy of consideration; his Op. 1 is of value where string players of modest skill are fortunate enough to have the help of a good pianist.

SPOHR has some piano quintets deserving performance, especially Op. 130 and Op. 131, while his double quartets for strings have been arranged for the combination under review.

HUMMEL's Op. 87 is a tuneful work written with a part for the double bass, but in the Peter's edition adapted for the two violins without the bass. The same composer's famous Septet Militaire for wind and strings has been adapted for the piano quintet and, if I am not mistaken, by the composer himself.

FRANZ LACHNER has written quintets, of which Op. 139 and Op. 145, at least, are of value to amateurs, as is the Op. 107 of J. J. RAFF.

KARL REISSIGER, too, that friend to the amateur, that awful example to the modernist, has some melo-

dious specimens to his credit (or discredit), amongst which my favourites are Op. 20 and Op. 191.

The Op. 144 and Op. 114 of Joseph Rheinberger are fairly well known as being quite satisfactory to amateurs.

CÉSAR FRANCK's quintet in F minor is in repute with both amateurs and professionals; it is to be found fairly often upon the programmes of Chamber Concerts, and yet it is not impossible for amateurs to give a satisfactory rendering.

The Op. 83 of CARL REINECKE deserves attention.

There is a quintet by CARL GOLDMARK, Op. 30, an admirable specimen; the string parts are not easy, and that for the piano is decidedly difficult, but the quintet is within the range of earnest amateurs.

After Schumann's masterpiece, the piano quintets of Brahms and Dvorak are probably the finest examples yet produced.

BRAHMS, Op. 34 in F minor, is a great work, from the impressive unison theme with which it opens to its glorious close. This quintet is distinctly difficult, and the amateur's chief satisfaction in studying it may be in hearing it performed by expert players; much the same may be said of the Op. 81 of DVORAK, though technically this is decidedly less exacting, while all the movements are gay and melodious.

Our countryman PROUT in his Op. 3 has written a quintet which is even finer than his two piano quartets, and is only moderately difficult.

SIR C. V. STANFORD has composed Chamber Music of which amateurs can make use, and from their point

of view his quintet, Op. 25, is perhaps the most satisfactory.

The quintets of S. JADASSOHN, Op. 70, 76, and 126, are fairly easy, and so melodious that amateurs may perform them in public with every probability of an appreciative audience.

Besides the charming piano quartet, Op. 34, amateurs are indebted to Gerard Cobb for the really fine piano quintet, Op. 22.

I must not omit to mention the Gressenhall Suite by F. Cunningham Woods, for piano, quintet (and bass *ad lib.*); if very light and easy, this suite is welcome to less experienced amateurs.

Space does not allow me to dilate on the following quintets, all of which we have tried, but of none can we boast of the success of our representations; a more expert music circle may succeed and will then admire them:—

Dohnanyi, Op. 1.

Arensky, Op. 51.

Castillon, Op. 1.

Fauré, Op. 89.

Friskin, Op. 1.

Hinton, Op. 30.

Novak, Op. 12.

Of quintets for violin, viola, 'cello, bass, and piano I can recommend:—Dussek in F minor, Op. 41; Reissiger's Op. 209 (Peter and Novello) and two by Farrenc, Op. 30 and 31, also Hummel's Op. 74, and especially Op. 87, which has also been edited in Peter's issue for the more usual quintet.

The finest specimen for the group with the double bass is Schubert's well-known Trout Quintet, Op. 114.

George Onslow wrote a large number for this combination; in many of them the 'cello part is very difficult, and none that we have tried have we enjoyed.

CHAPTER VI.

SEXTETS, SEPTETS, OCTETS.

SEXTETS FOR STRINGS.

For two violins, two violas, and two 'cellos, the outstanding compositions are the two by BRAHMS, Op. 18 and Op. 36. Personally, I am an enthusiastic admirer of Brahms's Chamber Music, and loath to admit that much of it is outside the range of the majority of amateurs. These two sextets are magnificent works, and will repay conscientious study and rehearsal; they are anything but easy, and the parts for the so-called second instruments are no easier than the others. The early history of these sextets is a rather amusing instance of the reversal by posterity of contemporary criticism. We have already considered many examples where compositions enthused over by our ancestors are neglected, and even disliked, to-day, and here is a specimen of the contrary. The first sextet of Brahms was, in this country, first produced in public at a Monday Popular Concert in February, 1867, on the special recommendation of Joachim, who, with Piatti, took part in the performance, as well as in a string quartet by Schumann. These works were not

pleasing to a generation devoted to Mozart and Mendelssohn, and, among other condemnatory critics, the *Musical World*, of March 9th, 1867, wrote: "They fell dead. We are not at all surprised that such should have been the case, for, really, we can scarcely find a musical idea in either of these compositions from one end to the other; nor is the absence of original invention atoned for by unusual cleverness of treatment; or, indeed, by the exhibition of any musician-like quality whatever."

"A Daniel come to judgment!"

Both the works here condemned are now valued by all serious musicians; so, no doubt, compositions in which some of us to-day can "scarcely find a musical idea" may be destined to the Pantheon of the Art.

Of other sextets for the same combination, two fine works are the Op. 70 of TSCHAIKOVSKY and the Op. 48 of DVORAK; both of these require study, and the Dvorak composition soon repays this attention. Our little circle has not been successful with the sextet of the Russian composer, but found it, like the curate's egg, good in parts. The only other string sextet I can offer an opinion upon is the Op. 140 of Spohr, a clear and lively work.

Of sextets for piano and strings, the best with which I am acquainted is by S. JADASSOHN, Op. 100, for piano duet and the string quartet; this is a really lovely work, melodious and quite feasible for amateurs. It is interesting to note that it is dedicated to the late Mr. A. G. Kurtz, of Liverpool, well remembered as an enthusiastic and munificent patron of the Arts. Chamber Music owes much to the encouragement

afforded by Mr. Kurtz; other works besides this charming sextet were inscribed with his name, among them F. LACHNER's quintet, Op. 145. The present writer had the privilege of taking part in some of the orgies of Chamber Music that took place in the fine music-room of Mr. Kurtz's house in Wavertree; and especially vivid is his remembrance of performances of Spohr's double quartets, most of the instruments employed being valuable Cremona specimens supplied by Mr. Kurtz.

Of sextets for piano, two violins, viola, 'cello, and bass I can recommend that by GLINKA in E flat major and the Op. 8 of A. FESCA. One or two by BERTINI are interesting to read through.

There is a piano sextet for this combination, in D major, found among the posthumous papers of Mendelssohn, and the date on it shows it was composed when this precocious genius was barely fifteen years old. This composition had its first public performance at the 292nd Monday Popular in March, 1868, with Joachim, Piatti, and Arabella Goddard in the group. It was enthusiastically received and criticized, but in the 'sixties and 'seventies anything of Mendelssohn's was welcome in Britain, and I have not heard of any later performances.

SEPTETS:—

The septets in my library are all arrangements of other works. The septet for strings, or strings and piano, has not appealed to composers. The well-known septets are those including parts for wind instruments, such as Beethoven's Op. 20, Hummel's Op. 74B and

Op. 114. These have been arranged for other instruments, and will so be referred to in a later chapter.

OCTETS :—

Mendelssohn's Op. 20 for strings and Spohr's double quartets are the only specimens of which I have experience and can recommend. Schubert's Octet for wind and strings, Op. 166, is more suitable to the amateur in some arrangement, as described further on.

Where eight or more instruments are available, amateurs are more likely to try some of the Haydn and Romberg symphonies than to confine themselves to the few compositions for these numbers of performers.

CHAPTER VII.

DUETS FOR STRINGS.

Although concertos for two stringed instruments, with accompaniments for orchestra, organ or piano, appear occasionally on concert programmes, especially some by Bach and Brahms and one by Mozart, duets for two stringed instruments unaccompanied are rarely performed at public performances of Chamber Music. Those heard most frequently are two for violin and viola, arranged by J. HALVORSEN from a Passacaglia and a Saraband by HANDEL.

A considerable number of string duos were originally written for and are still much used for instructional purposes, the master playing one part and the pupil the other. Many of these are graded in series, as regards difficulty, to suit the student's progress as his ability improves with practice. Of this character, the duets by Pleyel, Dancla, Bruni, Mazas, and Rolla are the favourite examples, and it is remarkable how melodious and interesting most of them are, considering the limited means of production.

Two VIOLINS:—

That prolific composer, IGNAZ PLEYEL, wrote duets that are still popular nowadays, and generations of

violin students have had reason to thank him for these easy and moderately easy compositions.

J. B. DANCLA was a talented performer on the violin and professor of his instrument at the Paris Conservatoire; his prize quartet for strings is still played, and his duets for two violins, if fewer in number, are almost as useful as those of Pleyel.

A. B. BRUNI also was a distinguished violinist who has left easy and tuneful duets.

Perhaps the finest series of duets for two violins is that produced by F. MAZAS, a renowned violinist and a famous teacher of the violin; he wrote a large number of solos, quartets, trios, and duets, of which only the latter are much played in these days. These string duos, mostly for two violins, but a few for violin and viola or for two violas, are worthy of study for educational purposes, and at the same time are most agreeable for two violinists to play together for pleasure, having nothing of the dry exercise character often considered necessary in educative compositions. J. W. KALLIWODA, besides symphonies and Chamber Music now neglected, left some easy and tuneful duets, and the same adjectives apply to the duets of I. LACHNER.

The violin virtuoso VIOTTI, previously referred to, has left a number of violin duets varying in difficulty, but all worthy of study.

SPOHR's violin duets are still more difficult, and appeal to more advanced executants.

JANSA's duos are generally on the easy side, while those of ROLLA and ROMBERG are distinctly difficult. Among violin duets that I can recommend, but of less

interest than the preceding, are those of Hauptmann, Fiorillo, Krommer, Rode, and Campagnoli.

VIOLIN AND VIOLA:—

When we come to duets for violin and viola, it is a case of ROLLA first and the rest nowhere.

ALESSANDRO ROLLA (1757-1841), violinist, composer, and director of the Milan Conservatoire, gave lessons to Paganini and composed a considerable amount of Chamber Music, including a large number of duets for violin and viola, presenting a marvellous fecundity for melody and form. Some are easy, many are difficult, but all can be recommended to the student of the two instruments. They are even agreeable to listen to as well as to play. There are fifty of these duos in my library, and I am ever on the look-out for any I do not possess.

HAYDN wrote six duos for this combination; they are of little value.

MOZART did not disdain to produce two duets for the instruments, and, as he touched no form of music he did not adorn, they are naturally little gems.

Pleyel, Kalliwoda, Viotti, Bruni, Spohr, and Mazas have written a number of duets for violin and viola, and many of their violin duets have been adapted for these instruments; to the viola student they are all of value; all partake of the same tuneful nature, and all aid in the progressive development of technique.

LEOPOLD JANSA (1794-1875), a noted violinist, who was the first to play the Kreutzer Sonata, and who taught Lady Hallé, composed a number of duos for

violin and viola which are melodious and of only moderate difficulty.

Among the host of duets for these two instruments worthy of consideration are those of Robert Fuchs, Pichl, Hoffmeister, Possinger, Stamitz, Tsassistro, and Op. 14 of Kackowski; any of these occurring in second-hand catalogues will be worth securing, while most of the best duos have been reproduced in cheap editions. Duets for violin and 'cello, for viola and 'cello, and for two 'cellos exist by Rolla, Corelli, Kotzwara, Dancla, Griesbacher, and others. I have tried many of them, but those of the first two composers are the only ones I can recommend.

CHAPTER VIII.

WIND INSTRUMENTS IN CHAMBER MUSIC.

Not having had much experience in Chamber Music that includes parts for wind instruments, my library contains comparatively few specimens thereof. Amateur players of wind instruments are not very general, nor as a rule very efficient. Where several varieties of wind instruments are present, it is probable that some of the lighter symphonies, overtures, and other orchestral selections will be performed, rather than such a true Chamber Music item as Beethoven's Septet, Op. 20, for violin, viola, horn, clarinet, bassoon, 'cello, and bass, which must have been only rarely performed by true amateurs. Schubert's octet, Op. 66, also a lovely work for strings, horn, clarinet, and bassoon, is generally only available to amateurs in the form of a string quintet.

I propose to confine my attention to Chamber Music in which only one wind instrument appears, and that either clarinet or flute.

Undoubtedly, the wind instrument that blends most satisfactorily with strings, in the execution of Chamber Music, is the clarinet. Beethoven himself

arranged the septet above referred to for clarinet, 'cello, and piano.

We note also trios for clarinet, 'cello, and piano in Beethoven's Op. 11 and in the Op. 114 of Brahms.

Of trios for clarinet, viola, and piano, we may consider Mozart's *Divertimento* in E flat major and Schumann's *Fairy Tales*, Op. 132. Two very fine quintets for clarinet and the string quartet are Mozart's in A major and the Op. 115 of Brahms. In the absence of the clarinet its part is arranged for a second viola in the Brahms work.

FLUTE AND STRINGS :—

FRIEDRICK KUHLAU excelled as a flautist, as well as a pianist, and some of his Chamber Music for flute and strings is well worthy of preservation.

BEETHOVEN's *Serenade* for flute, violin, and viola, Op. 25, is even more popular as arranged for other combinations. A trio of Beethoven's, Op. 87, for two oboes and English horn is also published for flute, violin, and viola.

Among MOZART's less happy efforts may be considered his three quartets for flute and strings, and the same may be said of No. 27, where the oboe replaces the flute. Of these four, amateurs generally take the wind parts on a second violin. Some of PLEYEL's and ROMBERG's quintets for flute, violin, two violas, and 'cello will repay attention.

WEBER's trio in G minor for flute, 'cello, and piano is an interesting work often played with a violin in place of the flute.

It is of interest to note that MOZART composed

seven sextets, labelled Divertimentos, for the string quartet and two horns. Of these, the last in D major and No. 3 in B flat major were once very popular. I am not aware if these sextets have been arranged for instruments more popular with amateurs than is the French horn.

CHAPTER IX.

ARRANGEMENTS.

There exists a large amount of music for two, three, or more instruments, generally including the piano, arranged from operatic music, overtures, oratorios, and other orchestral works, or from favourite sonatas, or from ballads and other music for the voice. There is a large quantity of such stuff in my library, for the flesh is weak. However amusing for the amateur to indulge in, this is not legitimate Chamber Music, although etymologically it might have a claim to be included under the title. As I do not admit the claim, I shall not refer to such music further. However, the present fashion for the cult of folk-song has induced many modern composers to make various airs and songs the melodious basis of their contributions to Chamber Music. It is difficult to draw the line in this matter, for Beethoven, Haydn, Dvorak, and other gifted artists introduced popular tunes into movements of their Chamber Music, and even indulged in variations, howbeit only rarely and with restraint. There was a day when ingenious variations on songs, such as "The Blue Bells of Scotland" and "The Last Rose of Summer" were popular in drawing-rooms and even from concert platforms, but that fashion has

fortunately passed away. Nowadays, however, it has become a frequent practice to take some nearly-forgotten air, or some once-popular song, label it a "folk-song," and use it as the groundwork of so-called Chamber Music; this custom appears especially popular with British composers. After a series of weird chords and scales, bits of the (folk) song appear, and, sooner or later, the complete tune bursts forth, to be tortured with variations and tossed about from one instrument to another. This smacks rather of mechanical skill than of inventive power—*c'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas la guerre*.

However, there are arrangements of compositions for instruments different than those for which they were originally composed, which, as well as being convenient, may be quite fairly included in lists of Chamber Music. Where an instrument, wind or string, may be unavailable, a modification of the group can be satisfactory, and will enable the performers present to obtain an acquaintance with music that otherwise they could not experience, if superfine scruples in this matter were submitted to. Many editors of music have devoted their skill to such modifications, but perhaps Professor FR. HERMANN is the one to whom the amateur is most indebted in this respect; his arrangements have been widely adopted in the popular editions of Chamber Music as arranged for various combinations of instruments, and many a group of friends in the domestic circle must bless him for his efforts to accommodate whatever ensemble may be available. Hermann's arrangements extend over a wide range, from twenty of the Preludes of J. S. Bach arranged as duets

for violin and viola to Beethoven's wind and string septet adapted for piano, violin, viola, and 'cello.

There is some prejudice against the performance of Chamber Music by other instruments than those for which it was originally composed; but it is to be observed that such arrangements were often carried out or sanctioned by the composers themselves. It was, indeed, a frequent practice with BEETHOVEN; he arranged his famous Serenade String Trio in D major, Op. 8, as a trio for piano, violin, and 'cello, and also as Notturmo, Op. 42, for viola and piano; he also adapted the lovely quintet for piano and wind instruments, Op. 16, as the favourite piano quartet, Op. 75, and the string quintet in E flat, Op. 4, was also published as the Trio, Op. 63, and as an octet for wind instruments, Op. 103.

Beethoven's famous septet, Op. 20, for wind and strings, so highly eulogized by Haydn, was evidently, for a while, a favourite with its composer, for he arranged it as a string quintet, as a trio for clarinet (or violin), 'cello, and piano, Op. 38, and also as a piano duet; yet, in his later days, he is reported to have taken a dislike to the work, and to have resented it being eulogized. The list is yet incomplete, for Beethoven arranged his second symphony, Op. 36, as a piano trio, and from a piano sonata he constructed a string quartet.

Hummel's two fine septets for piano, wind, and strings, so frequently repeated at the Popular Concerts, were arranged by himself for piano, violin, viola, 'cello, and bass, while they were also adapted with a second violin instead of the bass; the one in D minor.

Op. 74, by F. Liszt. Fesca, Brahms, and others followed the same proceeding.

There are fortunate viola players able to perform 'cello parts, from the 'cello copy, and such may be very useful in a trio or quartet when the 'cellist is not available; it is an easier matter for a violinist to read the part for a flute or obce. There are a number of trios labelled by their composers as for piano, violin, and 'cello (or viola), and, in the case of a considerable number of others, I have found it satisfactory to transcribe the 'cello part into the alto clef for performance on the viola. Especially satisfactory are the first of Mendelssohn's trios, Schubert's Op. 99, and several of the trios by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, as well as Gade's Noveletten and most of the piano trios of Hummel, Reissiger, and Jadassohn.

The viola may replace an absent clarinet in MOZART'S lovely quintet for clarinet and strings, and the same composer's quintet in E flat major, Op. 452, for piano and wind, has been admirably arranged as a piano and string quintet by E. Naumann, and published by Breitkopf and Hartel; while the same editor and publisher are responsible for Bach's Brandenburg Concerto, No. 6 in B, as a piano and string quartet.

It would be a pity if the charming melodies of SCHUBERT'S Octet should only be available to amateurs on the rare occasions when sufficiently skilled amateur wind instrument performers can be obtained; fortunately, it has been adapted for strings and also for piano and strings.

MENDELSSOHN'S Octet for strings has been published for two violins, 'cello, and piano.

In addition to these and similar convenient rearrangements for exploiting Chamber Music, a number of the simpler symphonies may be successfully attempted; in arrangements for strings, including the double bass, and for flute and strings—both with and without a part for the piano for two or four hands. Many of the symphonies of Haydn, Romberg, and Mozart are especially suitable for such treatment, having been originally composed for little more than a small string orchestra with only a few wind parts. Such symphonies are quite interesting to play, when a number of instruments are available which do not fit in with the usual Chamber Music groups, and where some of the participants possess no remarkable technical skill

CHAPTER X.

A CHAT ABOUT CHAMBER MUSIC AND THE AMATEUR.

The preceding chapters have been devoted—imperfectly, I fear—to a catalogue of existing Chamber Music suitable for amateur executants. I avail myself of this final chapter to air my personal views on music in general and Chamber music in particular. These *obiter dicta* are only of value as reflecting the opinions of an amateur speaking to amateurs.

In the Arts, the distinction between the amateur and the professional is not a defined line. The professional has been described as the one who has to do it, and the amateur as one who does not have to do it. A cynical definition might be, that the amateur performs to give pleasure to himself, and the professional to give pleasure to others; but this would not be satisfactory, for most professionals enjoy their own performances, and some amateurs can afford enjoyment to others. The labels “virtuoso” and “dilettante” might be used; but the terms are rather under a cloud, virtuoso tending to connote display for its own sake and almost to suggest swank, while dilettante is sometimes synonymous with trifler.

Music resembles the dramatic art in that it requires at least two individuals to present it to its

public, the producer and the reproducer. It is true that these may be temporarily combined in one individual, to a very limited extent; but even here, in the course of a few years, this partnership is necessarily dissolved, and the work would be for ever lost were it not for successors to the reproducers.

In the reproduction of a musical composition there are two distinct pleasures—that of the interpreting agent, and that of the receptive audience; both these are available to the amateur who has a practical acquaintance with some musical instrument. The picture, the statue, the poem (and even the play as literature), once produced, can be experienced again at any time and for unlimited time and make their own appeal directly to the public, requiring no interpreter, unless the art critic may be considered such; but with music the work of art can hardly be said to exist without the assistance of the middleman, the interpreter. It is to emphasize the attraction of the personal production of a musical composition that these few notes are addressed to amateurs and to those who may be induced to become such. Amateurs can enjoy their art quite independently of any audience; indeed, how commonly does the vocalist or instrumentalist perform purely for his own pleasure, and, when in combination with others in the quartet, the amateur orchestra, or the choral society, the combination may be observed rehearsing with obvious delight, without any view to an audience, and, indeed, often to the amazement of any audience that may be present. This is a pleasure open even to quite indifferent performers, to such as have not the time or skill to be-

come experts; there is music adapted to all degrees of technical capacity, as I have endeavoured to illustrate in the preceding pages. The enjoyment of the form of Chamber Music performed in the social circle is one that cannot be properly obtained from mechanism; no gramophone or pianola reproduction, however perfect in itself, can substitute that of a less finished personal production by voice or instrument. I do not hesitate to assert that there is more pleasure to be obtained from an imperfect performance in which one takes a part, even if it be only the second violin in an easy quartet or only the triangle in an amateur orchestra, than in listening to a more perfect performance by others—just as there is more physical benefit to be obtained by the playing of games indifferently as an amateur than by watching gladiatorial displays by bodies of professional performers.

A considerable portion of the Chamber Music in existence is sufficiently difficult of reproduction to put it beyond the range of any but specially gifted amateurs, and the average performer will only be discouraged if he attempt such compositions or try to emulate the speed with which the quick movements, even of classical compositions, are taken by experts.

There is so decided a revival of interest in Chamber Music at present, and our native composers are devoting so much of their genius to the production of such music that a plea is justified for some consideration for the amateur. The success of the British Music Society in gathering together professionals and amateurs, for the furthering of the interests of music and of musicians, is so promising and has led to the forma-

tion of so many Chamber Music Circles as to support the claims of the amateur on the composer's attention.

In considering the relation of amateurs to Chamber Music, it is of interest to recall that much of the best Chamber Music in existence was written especially for amateurs, while another portion was inscribed to such. Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven dedicated a considerable number of their compositions to amateur musicians; they seem not to have contemplated such works being performed before large audiences, but rather in the social circle by their friends, including cultivated amateurs. Mendelssohn dedicated his four string quartets to amateurs, and so did many others. Indeed, it is to a number of wealthy and aristocratic amateurs that we owe much of the classical Chamber Music that we enjoy to-day. The small orchestras maintained by these patrons enabled Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and others to have their works first performed and their effect tested, and, if these music-lovers struggled to take some of the parts themselves, small blame to them. It was to their order that many of the best works were produced and at their expense they were published; indeed, but for their help socially and financially, much of the work would never have existed or have been preserved. The donations and salaries they dispensed enabled some of the composers themselves to exist, and find leisure for composition, for the sale of their works to the public would never have had this result.

It is also worth noting that some amateurs themselves have composed quite creditable Chamber Music,

to mention only Prince Louis Ferdinand and the Englishmen George Onslow, J. L. Ellerton, and Gerard Cobb. Some credit for the production of Chamber Music and its widespread accessibility to the public by cheap editions is due, of course, to various enterprising publishers. In Germany the great publishing firm of Breitkopf & Härtel secured the publication of many priceless works of art which otherwise might never have seen the light, and the firms of Peters and Augener, with their excellent cheap editions, introduced the works to countless homes.

Amateurs who can themselves play some instrument and who meet or might be stimulated to meet for the practice of Chamber Music are more numerous than is generally recognized by the composers of to-day. To many isolated enthusiasts, centres, like the local branches of the British Music Society, by means of which they can be put in touch with those of similar tastes, secure rooms for their meetings and the loan of music, should lead to further interest in the purchase and practice of Chamber Music, and, incidentally, to increased attendance at recitals of such music. This should be worthy the attention and encouragement of our composers, for such amateurs form a large proportion of those who buy Chamber Music and who attend concerts of this class of music. It is delightful to listen to a composition that one has studied when such is played by professional experts; but even this is less delightful than it is to take part oneself in the production.

There is little doubt that, until the last few years, there had been a decided slump in Chamber Music—

in the attention paid thereto by composers, in the encouragement afforded to concerts of such music by the public, and in the number of amateurs who take part in the practice of the same at home.

In the latter part of the last century [1859-1887] a great movement towards the public appreciation of Chamber Music in this country was initiated by Mr. Arthur Chappell, and carried out with remarkable results. In St. James's Hall, London, each winter a series of concerts confined to Chamber Music were given on Monday evenings and Saturday afternoons; they were named Popular, and, as it turned out, the term was applied justly. Many important works had their first public performance at these recitals. For twenty-eight years audiences of 2,000 enthusiasts crowded the concert-room, mostly at the popular price of one shilling, making a total of 50,000 in each series of thirty concerts. Similarly crowded concerts were given in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Bradford, Manchester, and Liverpool. As a consequence, widespread interest in such music was evoked and large numbers of amateurs inspired to indulge in it. In my student days in London I attended many of these concerts, and heard performances participated in by Joachim, Wieniawski, Ries, Zerbini, Piatti, Norman Neruda, and Arabella Goddard. "There were giants in those days"!

At this same time, parties of amateurs, who met for Chamber Music were scattered all over London and the larger towns, especially in Yorkshire and Lancashire. The slump antedated the war, but recently there have been signs of a revival; concerts of

Chamber Music have again become fairly frequent and popular, and modern composers have produced a quantity of such music, while much is only awaiting financial encouragement for its publication. To aid this renaissance I beg some consideration for the amateur.

The precision of attack and of ensemble playing and the grades of tone and expression exhibited by professional executants border on the marvellous, and the speed at which vivace and presto movements are taken is beyond the powers of any body of amateurs that I have met. Indeed, as regards the compositions of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and other classics, the pace is, I venture to believe, beyond the speed limit as intended by such composers, and more rapid than they themselves ever heard their works produced. As exhibitions such velocity is prodigious, but more calculated to produce wonder than enjoyment. The Minuet, as Haydn, Mozart, and their followers understood it, was a leisurely dance, and even a presto should have some respect for the speed limit of human fingers and ears. However, it is not in this particular that modern Chamber Music discourages the amateur so much as in its want of melody, its abstruseness and broken rhythm, its formlessness and technical difficulties. Of the executive difficulty of modern music there will be no dispute, but I am venturing on more dangerous ground when I express the opinion that much of it is bizarre, freakish, and discordant in idiom, rhythm, and harmony. Of course, any series of sounds, even scales and exercises, command admiration as played by the world's virtuosi; but for mortals of common clay much modern music is distasteful

to study and listen to. I am not theorist enough to analyse why this is so—how much to attribute to consecutive fifths, eccentric rhythm, the whole-tone scale, the avoidance of the common chord, and so on. It may be that the resources of Chamber Music form have been exhausted by the classical composers and their successors, and the eccentric products of to-day are all that remain to be exploited in this department. After all, there are only twelve notes, and of these the permutations and combinations are not unlimited. With the orchestra there is the further variation of the difference in quality of tone of wind, string, and percussion instruments, and of massed production; but even here the greatest composer who ever lived thought fit to employ voices in part of his latest symphony, as Mr. Arthur Bliss does to-day in some of his Chamber Music. If the agreeable capabilities of the Chamber Music form are played out, it only remains to amateurs to continue with the older works we have and know, and to resign modern work to those with the skill to perform it and the taste to enjoy it. The exhaustion of the Chamber Music form can only be a recent catastrophe, for charming specimens, clear, melodious, and grateful to play and to listen to have been produced by composers so modern as Jadassohn, Prout, Stanford, Glazounof, Fauré, Gerard Cobb, and others.

It is to be noted that, even with those who assume an affection for ultra-modern music, when arranging concert programmes they sandwich such in between classical favourites—much as the boy who, having a bad penny on his hands, bought two-pennyworth of

toffee, and, placing the defective coin between two good ones, escaped with the idea that he had passed it successfully. I avail myself of every opportunity that comes my way to hear British Chamber Music performed by experts; much of it I enjoy, but there is little of it I would care to listen to were amateurs responsible for the production, and I know of few amateurs who are technically capable of doing so; for, even in the less exacting compositions there are generally a few bars here and there impossible, even to the clever amateur. I have purchased and borrowed a considerable quantity of this very modern stuff, and I and my musical friends have patriotically struggled with it; but I could count on my fingers the compositions we have not had to relegate to the top shelves in my library, inspiring reproach and accumulating dust, while we rearrange one of the beloved classics on our music stands.

By the term "classic" is understood a composition the appreciation of which has stood the test of time—say, at least fifty years—and by this test the great period for the composition of Chamber Music was from 1755, when Haydn composed his first string quartet, to the death of Schumann in 1856. Chamber Music was written before Haydn's day, but little of this has survived, while of that composed in the last seventy years we may feel confident that the compositions of Mendelssohn, Brahms, and Dvorak at least will join the band of classics, as will, I trust, much of that commended in the preceding pages. The Chamber Music of the classical giants quoted will surely last as long as does the human ear and brain.

I am told that this ultra-modern music is very clever and that great skill is evidenced in its composition; I am also told that it is much better than it sounds, and that it is very old-fashioned to judge of music by how it sounds. My friends who enthuse over some recent cubist composition seem readier to praise it than to avail themselves of opportunities to listen to it, and appear not to be so impressed by the beauty of the performance as by admiration that it should be done at all. They scorn the music I love, and term it sugary, antiquated, conventional, superficial, and similar adjectives; they label me a "Philistine"—whatever that may mean—because I plead guilty to an affection for simplicity, melody, and harmony.

Gilbert might have been to a concert of very modern examples, when he wrote in the *Bab Ballads*:—

"It was wild—it was fitful—as wild as the breeze,
It wandered about into several keys;
It was jerky, spasmodic and harsh I'm aware,
But still it distinctly suggested an air."

but its admirers would indignantly contest the verdict in the last line.

I know of no explanation of why some music is agreeable to the great majority while some appeals only to the few. We are built that way. The enjoyment of music is an emotion and not a reasoned deduction from argument. After all, the highbrows are a small minority, and it is a presumption on their part to label as rubbish whatever music stirs and pleases the public, and is therefore decried as popular, as though this term were a reproach. If the object of Art be to give æsthetic pleasure, surely the world owes

more to Verdi, Gounod, and Sullivan than to all the Scriabins and Stravinskys that torture and weary our senses.

There is always a public prepared to have their opinions formed for them by the Press. In the domains of painting, poetry, and music literary suggestion is used to boom new developments, and, especially with regard to music, there is a mysterious jargon by which some critics seek to justify any acoustic outrage. To pretend that every sound is "music" is futile—much of it is more justly included under the term "noise." There is a certain amount of wonder and notoriety to be obtained by enthusing over something which, to the common or garden individual, appears far from praiseworthy; such views evidence a superiority to the common herd. In all the arts there are disciples whose aim it is to shock general opinion, to stir up the Philistine; they consider all form as formality; they paint cubist pictures, write unintelligible verse and compose discordant music. To such any comparison of their output with the great works and methods of the past is revolting. They have their little day and cease to be. So distinguished a composer and critic as Mr. Hamilton Harty has recently excused himself from not reproducing more of the works of modern British composers because so much of it is bad and insincere.

Argument about taste is notoriously futile, but there can be little doubt that, as regards technical difficulty, modern Chamber Music with few exceptions makes no appeal to the amateur executant. The works of the classical composers are all, with the ex-

ception of Beethoven's later quartets, within the capabilities of good amateurs; while even the Chamber Music of Brahms and Dvorak are not impossible, with study and practice. Chamber Music is for the home as well as for the concert platform and therefore the home circle demands some consideration. That Maecenas of composers of modern Chamber Music, Mr. W. W. Cobbett, has declared: "The amateur is the backbone of a nation's music," so if the backbone be eliminated wherewith shall the body be supported? It is not suggested that any composer should write down to any amateur level, but it is suggested that it might occasionally be well to consider the amateur.

A critic [Mr. Warlock] recently wrote as follows: "In the laying out of music one should think only of what the finest players can render effectively . . . it is monstrous that a composer should be expected to accommodate his ideas to the indifferent technical abilities of amateurs." Well and good! In the words of Mrs. Gamp: "Who deniges of it?" If, however, the composer avail himself of his power to exclude the amateur, it is undignified that he and his friends should lament so vociferously the limited sale of their Chamber Music compositions and the difficulty of getting such published, and should decry the lack of appreciation displayed by the public, including "the indifferent amateurs." The "finest players" are a very limited body and Chamber Concerts have a limited appeal outside the ranks of these same amateurs of indifferent ability; while in countless homes amateurs might entertain music that was accommodated to the technical ability of the domestic circle and would cease

to be indifferent to music, even if they never became rivals to the finest players. The world's best songs are not "only" possible to a Patti or a Caruso, though such gifted individuals will produce them in a way no amateur could attempt; and song writers, who wish widespread appreciation, do not think only of what the finest singers can render. Art for Art's sake and "damn the consequences" may be a fine gesture, but if Chamber Music is to be caviare to the general such will not indulge in the product merely to keep it on the sideboard or to witness its consumption by those who have the uncommon digestion required. If Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Dvorak and others could write music the amateur can make use of, it should not be below the dignity of one of our young British School to occasionally "accommodate his ideas to the technical ability" of others than the "finest players." The demand for Chamber Concerts and the opportunities for hearing new music of this class from the concert platform would not enable all the works produced to secure even one public performance and, without trusts like the Carnegie Endowment and zealous patrons like Mr. W. W. Cobbett, many of them would remain in MSS. and probably perish stillborn. Professional musicians will not secure copies, except for such public performances as may be available, and it is a logical result that therefore such copies will have a very limited sale and so will make little return, either in artistic reputation or in filthy lucre, for the genius, skill and trouble expended on their production.

In a German musical periodical I find so well expressed views, similar to those I am describing, that

I transcribe a brief extract:—"The position of the public with respect to the music-publishing trade is essentially different to its position towards the book-selling trade. Music is purchased beyond comparison more extensively by those who themselves play and sing, and consists, therefore, only of such as come within the sphere of their powers of execution and of their taste. Thus the regular market depends upon the majority of half-educated amateurs. Very limited, on the other hand, is the number of thoroughly educated musicians, who purchase music with independent judgment and serious interest: professional musicians have not always the education or the wish, and frequently not the leisure for pursuing studies of this description. In most instances the necessary means are wanting. Music costs more to print, in proportion to the average sale, than books cost."

There is a further consideration still; if we agree with the critic's view that in the plan of a composition no regard is to be paid to the ways and means of reproduction, namely, why should we limit ourselves even to "what the finest players can render effectively"? Surely this also is a restriction to "the laying out of music"? Let the composer pile on his difficulties and amplify the critic's phrase by declaring it is monstrous that a composer should be expected to accommodate his ideas to *any* human technical ability; there is still the octopus and the machine.

Indeed we are getting on in this direction, as the following quotation from the musical press will indicate:—"Mr. Eugene Goossens and Mr. Alfredo Casella have recently composed some pianoforte music,

specially for the player-piano, which is extremely modern and complex in character. The composers have taken advantage of the greater scope possible as between the player-piano and the human hands, and have composed works which would be technically impossible of performance in the ordinary way."

I fear my plea for the amateur as producer as well as listener may appear querulous and exaggerated, unless it be understood that my remarks are not intended to apply to modern music in general, but only to Chamber Music—the amateur's province. Although amateur orchestras exist and flourish it is not suggested that, as regards technical difficulty, these demand any consideration at the composer's hands. There is a sufficiency of orchestral music adapted for use by amateur bands and, in any case, such music is for concert use and not for the domestic circle, and therefore experts can be engaged. Any Chamber Music intended solely for concert use need demand little consideration as to difficulty of reproduction. There are also gifted soloists among amateurs and there will always be a sufficiency of music for such, as well as for solo performers of lesser degrees of skill. But Chamber Music intended for home consumption must regard the taste and ability of the world of amateurs if it is to secure widespread appreciation and adoption.

There are amateurs whose native gifts have been so developed by study and practice that they perform quite respectably the concertos, sonatas and solos usually confined to the professional repertoire, yet who are quite unaware of the stores of Chamber Music at

their disposal and well within their technical capacity. By directing their attention thereto I trust to introduce them to a field in which they may find pleasure for themselves and afford such to others.

The works of some composers appeal especially to the use and affection of amateurs, and this in my view is characteristic of the music of S. Jadassohn. Were I asked by amateurs of moderate skill and of not ultra modern tastes seeking to form a Chamber Music Circle for a hint as to the laying out of a preliminary and inexpensive library, I should advise them to obtain Haydn's string quartets, either the complete edition or the twenty celebrated edition, Mozart's quartets and quintets, Dvorak's Nigger quartet, Tschaikovsky's Op. II and Gretchaninof's Op. I. Were a pianist available I would urge them to obtain all Jadassohn's music they could lay their hands on, trios, quartets, quintets and the sextet. Jadassohn died so recently as 1902; he was a professor at the Leipsig Conservatoire and the teacher of harmony; he was an authority on form and instrumentation, and all his Chamber Music is interesting to play and delightful to listen to. This small library could easily be collected from the cheap editions and the second-hand catalogues, and would suffice for many meetings before excursions need be made into more difficult and more modern fields.

My aim in putting together these Notes has not been to air any personal views, but to help, in a humble way, to stimulate the widespread practice of Chamber Music, which is not only a valuable recreation, but is sure to make the man a better musician, the musician a better man.

Often one may hear someone lament that he had not kept up the practice of some instrument learned in youth; so that now, when he has more leisure, he might enjoy music in the domestic circle. Now, says he, "it is too late." It is never too late!

Certainly to attain much executive skill in any art the younger one begins to cultivate that art the better; but great technical skill is not necessary for intense enjoyment of the study of any science or art. Where lack of time or opportunity has prevented the cultivation of an art to which one is attracted in one's earlier years, it is quite possible to commence at any age, given a fair amount of taste and capacity; and this is still more successful if the art is one that was once indulged in but the practice of which has been crowded out in later years by other duties. Many men have written their first books after middle life, books that have enriched a nation's literature; many have taken up painting in later life with pleasure and satisfaction. I have a friend who was over fifty years of age when he commenced to practise the violoncello: he is now a very good executant and able to take part in concerted music, with his declining years irradiated by an enchanting hobby.

On retiring from the strenuous pursuit of their business or profession men seek some occupation for their leisure: given a fair ear and some skilled guidance, they could acquire considerable facility on some musical instrument, with less worry and energy than many of them devote to becoming indifferent fozzlers at golf.

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